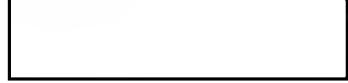


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Central Intelligence Bulletin

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3 October 1969

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C South Vietnam: The militant Buddhists continue to follow a cautious policy in their relations with the government.

The Buddhists have made a conciliatory gesture which they hope will secure the early release of Thich Thien Minh, a prominent bonze arrested earlier this year on charges of harboring Viet Cong in his Saigon Youth Center. They have dissolved the committee set up to protest his continued incarceration. According to Minister of State Phan Quang Dan, the move satisfies the essential condition which President Thieu had stipulated for freeing the bonze and provides Thieu with justification for acting.

Rumors that the recent hospitalization of Minh stemmed from poisoning while in prison, however, may compel Thieu to defer early action on his case until the air of suspicion has cleared.

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Singapore-USSR: Singapore is moving ahead with plans to expand economic ties with the USSR.

A trade office under the auspices of INTRACO, Singapore's newly established state trading company, reportedly will open in Moscow this December. Trade between the two countries, which totaled about \$46 million in 1968, has been carried out under a long-term trade agreement concluded in 1966. The Soviets established a trade office in Singapore shortly after the conclusion of this agreement.

The establishment of commercial representation in Moscow reflects the government's policy of pursuing favorable trade relations with as many countries as possible. In the case of the USSR, Singapore is interested not only in increasing its export markets, but also in balancing the Chinese Communist influence. Last year the USSR and Singapore formed a joint shipping agency. Following the signature this year of a civil air agreement, Aeroflot, Moscow's commercial airline, initiated regular weekly service to Singapore.

According to one official source, a resident Singapore ambassador will be stationed in Moscow by next summer. The two countries established diplomatic relations in June 1968. The first Soviet ambassador to Singapore arrived in January.

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Morocco: Nationwide elections for communal councils--the first since 1963--are being held today.

These communal elections may serve as the basis for establishing a consultative assembly at the national level. Such an assembly would be designed as a sop to Moroccan politicians who have been calling for the election of a new parliament and the termination of the "state of exception" that has been in effect since the King suspended parliament in June 1965.

The two opposition parties--the nationalist Istiqlal, and the left-wing National Union of Popular Forces, which includes the largest and most vocal of Morocco's labor unions--charge that the government is rigging the elections. Although both parties initially announced they would boycott the elections, Istiqlal subsequently reversed itself and permitted its members to be candidates. The National Union of Popular Forces, however, has threatened to expel any party members who seek election. Nevertheless, it claims that, if the elections were free, it would repeat its 1960 victories and gain sizable majorities in the major coastal cities.

The government will do its utmost to get out the vote and will take firm steps to forestall any efforts by the opposition to obstruct the proceedings or to stage demonstrations.

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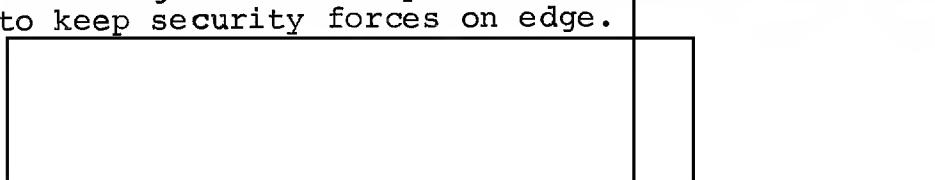
Dominican Republic: Vice President Lora has taken the lead in the drive to stop President Balaguer from seeking re-election.

Lora announced this week that he will seek the presidency in 1970, even if he loses the Reformist Party nomination to Balaguer. Balaguer, an announced but widely presumed candidate for re-election, has been keeping Lora's supporters out of positions of influence in the party. The vice president's announcement is probably in part a reaction to Balaguer's success. Lora may also be attempting to marshal the diverse opposition forces by serving notice that he is in the fight to the end.

Anti-Balaguer forces of all political hues remain a squabbling, factionalized opposition. A number of politicians have recently suggested nonpartisan public demonstrations against a second term for Balaguer, however, and Lora probably hopes to take advantage of such tenuous signs of unity.

Even if united, Balaguer's foes face an uphill struggle against a President who presently appears to have enough popular support for an electoral victory and the military backing to make the decision stick. Most of Balaguer's opponents privately admit that he will probably win if he runs, and their strategy is therefore designed to force him to withdraw. If large public rallies materialize, extremist elements can be expected to attempt to provoke violence, which Balaguer's opponents have warned is in the offing. A recent spate of political killings, including attacks on policemen, has probably served to keep security forces on edge.

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Czechoslovakia: The Czechoslovak parliament yesterday recommended legal action against General Prchlik, an unrepentant liberal, allegedly for divulging military secrets in a speech last year. Such action could lead to selective prosecution of progressives, which in turn might intensify open factional fighting within the party hierarchy. It would also considerably weaken the position of party leader Husak, who has asserted repeatedly that there would be no "show trials." Defense Minister Dzur, who is in Moscow on other business, may argue with the Soviets that arrests of popular progressives at this time could again lead to public demonstrations.

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East Germany: Soviet party boss Brezhnev heads the list of visiting dignitaries to the 20th anniversary celebration to be held between 4 and 7 October. Representatives from many third world states are expected, some of whom may be ready to announce their recognition of East Germany during the festivities. Walter Ulbricht, who heads both the party and government, may find the anniversary a propitious time to relinquish some of his responsibilities. Recent rumors concerning leadership changes probably reflect wishful thinking, however. A recent first-hand observation of the 76-year-old leader found him vigorous and mentally alert.

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Bolivia: General Ovando is planning a propaganda campaign against the Peace Corps that will culminate in its permanent expulsion from the country.

Ovando probably views the Peace Corps as a target that provides an opportunity to follow up his government's anti-US line with some concrete action that would not, however, provoke US counteraction damaging to Bolivia's weak economy.

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Brazil: New terrorist attacks reportedly are planned against US personnel. Security officials in Belo Horizonte expect terrorists to try to kidnap or attack US personnel there in the near future. They also expect a new wave of bank robberies. The US - Brazilian Binational Center in the city received a threatening letter Wednesday, and security precautions at US installations have been increased. The security officials did not say which group they suspect of planning the terrorism, but it could have links to the terrorist organizations that kidnaped Ambassador Elbrick on 4 September and later attacked the police unit guarding the US Consulate General in Sao Paulo.

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UN - Arms Control: Participants in the 25-nation Geneva disarmament talks appear to be losing their enthusiasm for a chemical and biological warfare (CBW) resolution that would have the effect of barring the use of tear gas. Sweden now doubts that its initiative can obtain consensus backing at the General Assembly. There is some sentiment that after Assembly consideration of the subject, the various CBW proposals should be referred to Geneva for review along with the report of Secretary General U Thant on CBW. He wants a UN resolution clearly affirming that the Geneva Protocol of 1925 already prohibits usage of CBW agents, including tear gas, in war.

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

The United States Intelligence Board on 2 October 1969 approved the following national intelligence estimate:

SNIE 64.2-1-69

"Prospects for Political
Stability in Federal Ni-
geria"

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